

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 20096 271624Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OES-06 /076 W
-----271633Z 001214 /44

R 271358Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2478
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 20096

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US
SUBJECT: JEWISH CULTURAL AFFAIRS SYMPOSIUM

REF: MOSCOW 19965

1. SUMMARY. ALL THOSE JEWS WHO WERE PLACED UNDER HOUSE
ARREST OR INTERROGATED DURING THE PERIOD WHEN THE SYMPOSIUM
WAS SCHEDULED ARE NOW RELEASED. THE JEWISH DEMONSTRATION
IN FRONT OF LENIN LIBRARY DID NOT TAKE PLACE. WE ARE TOLD
THAT DISSIDENT JEWS IN OTHER SOVIET CITIES ALSO HAD TROUBLE
DURING THIS PERIOD. MOSCOW'S JEWISH DISSIDENT COMMUNITY HAS
NOT YET DECIDED WHAT, IF ANYTHING, TO DO NEXT. IT WILL ALMOST
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 20096 271624Z

CERTAINLY WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE NEW YEAR BEFORE
DECIDING WHAT TO DO. END SUMMARY.

2. AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, ALL OF THE MUSCOVITE JEWS
WHO HAD PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABORTIVE JEWISH
CULTURAL AFFAIRS SYMPOSIUM (TO HAVE BEEN HELD DEC 21-23)

ARE NOW BACK IN CIRCULATION. THOSE UNDER HOUSE ARREST, ALL IN ALL ABOUT 20 PEOPLE, WERE TOLD ON THE EVENING OF DEC 24 THAT THE PERIOD OF DETENTION HAD ENDED. THOSE PEOPLE WHO WERE MERELY BEING TAILED IN AN OBVIOUS AND UNPLEASANT MANNER DISCOVERED THAT THEIR TAILS DISAPPEARED ABOUT THE SAME TIME. THOSE JEWS INVITED FOR EITHER INTERROGATION AT THE MOSCOW PRO-CURATOR'S OFFICE OR "CONVERSATIONS" AT KGB HEAD-QUARTERS TELL US THAT NO FURTHER TALKS ARE SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME. WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC CASES OF LERNER AND SLEPAK--BOTH UNDER HOUSE ARREST, BUT FOR REASONS THAT ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR--WE GATHER THAT BOTH ARE NOW FREE AND THAT NO ADDITIONAL, SPECIAL INTEREST IS CURRENTLY BEING TAKEN IN THEM.

3. THE DEMONSTRATION PLANNED FOR DEC 24 AT THE LENIN LIBRARY (OSCOW 19759 NOTAL) DID NOT TAKE PLACE. SOME 30 WOULD-BE DEMONSTRATORS WERE ACCOSTED AS EACH LEFT HIS HOME AND EITHER TOLD TO STAY AT HOME FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS, OR DETAINED FOR SEVERAL HOURS WITHOUT ANY CHARGE BEING PREFERRED. OTHER POTENTIAL DEMONSTRATORS, UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN CONNECTION WITH THE SYMPOSIUM, COULD NOT ATTEND EITHER, AS THE PERIOD OF ARREST WAS EXTENDED TO INCLUDE THE 24TH. A SMALL NUMBER (ABOUT FIVE) OF THE WIVES OF PROMINENT MUSCOVITE REFUSENIKS DID GET WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE LIBRARY BUT EACH WAS PREVENTED FROM GETTING CLOSER. THOSE PRESENT AT THE DEMONSTRATION SITE CONSISTED, AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, EXCLUSIVELY OF WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS AND A LARGE, IF DISCREET CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 20096 271624Z

FORCE OF PLAINCLOTHES AND UNIFORMED POLICE (ONE CORRESPONDENT SAID THAT THE JOURNALISTS AND POLICE SPENT FIFTEEN MINUTES PHOTOGRAPHING EACH OTHERS).

4. ACCORDING TO SCATTERED REPORTS, JEWS HAD TROUBLE IN OTHER SOVIET CITIES DURING THE PERIOD OF THE SYMPOSIUM. SEVERAL LENINGRAD JEWS WERE ARRESTED--IN PARTICULAR TWO OF THE GROUP PUBLISHING THE CLANDESTINE JOURNAL "YEVREY V SSSR." GROUPS OF JEWS IN KIEV, CHERNOVTS, KISHINEV AND RIGA WERE NOT ALLOWED TO BOARD PLANES OR TRAINS FOR MOSCOW DURING THE PERIOD OF THE SYMPOSIUM. WE ALSO HAVE ONE REPORT OF THE ARREST OF TWO JEWS IN ODESSA ALLEGEDLY ON CHARGES CONNECTED WITH THE SYMPOSIUM, BUT WE HAVE NO DETAILS.

5. MOSCOW'S REFUSENIK COMMUNITY IS CURRENTLY ASSESSING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NON-EVENTS OF THE

SYMPOSIUM AND DEMONSTRATION, THE REACTION OF THE
AUTHORITIES AND THE MEDIA PLAY IN THE WEST. AS USUAL,
THERE IS A GOOD DEAL OF DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY OVER WHAT, IF ANYTHING, TO DO NEXT. WHATEVER
DECISION IS MADE EVENTUALLY, IT PROBABLY WILL NOT BE TAKEN
UNTIL AFTER THE NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JEWS, HARASSMENT, DETENTION, SEMINARS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW20096
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760472-1256
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761213/aaaaakrt.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MOSCOW 19965
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 APR 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <07 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JEWISH CULTURAL AFFAIRS SYMPOSIUM
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006